Ipsos

Ipsos Reid

Albertans and the Kyoto Protocol

A Quantitative Survey

Preliminary Key Findings

May 2002

WWW.IPSOS-REID.COM

Methodology

These are the preliminary key findings of an Ipsos-Reid poll conducted on behalf of the Government of Alberta between April 18th and 28th, 2002. The poll is based on a randomly selected sample of 1000 adult Albertans. With a sample of this size, the results are considered accurate to within ± 3.1 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, of what they would have been had the entire adult population of Alberta been surveyed. The margin of error will be larger for sub-groupings of the survey population. These data were statistically weighted to ensure the sample's region, age and gender composition reflects that of the actual Alberta population according to the 1996 Census data.

Preliminary Key Findings

Awareness and Knowledge

- Pollution (33%) emerges at the top of Albertans' list of the most serious environmental issues facing the province today. Issues related to the Kyoto Protocol such as greenhouse gas emissions and global warming are mentioned by about one in ten (12%) and one in twenty (5%) respectively. A total of only 3% of Albertans mention the Kyoto Protocol specifically.

- Awareness of climate change and global warming is quite high among Albertans. Seventy percent of those who did not mention climate change or global warming as an important issue, say they have seen, read or heard something about it in the last month. Similarly, 64% of those who did not mention the Kyoto Protocol as one of the most important environmental issues facing Alberta, say they have seen read or heard something about it in the last month.

- Albertans do not think that human activity is entirely responsible for causing global warming. Almost half (47%) say that greenhouse gasses caused by human activity are "only partially responsible for causing climate change and global warming". In contrast, slightly more than one third (36%) say that greenhouse gasses caused by human activity are "the main cause of climate change and global warming". Meanwhile, almost one in five (17%) say that climate change and global warming are "simply part of a natural cycle of the earth and are not strongly influenced by human activity".

Support for Kyoto Protocol

- Seven in ten (72%) Albertans say they support ratifying the Kyoto Protocol (33% "strongly support", 39% "somewhat support") while a quarter (26%) say they oppose implementing it (12% "somewhat oppose", 14% "strongly oppose").

- Despite a high level of support, only one third (36%) of Albertans know that the Kyoto Protocol commits Canada to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, including only 5% who could name the specific target to which Canada would be committed. In contrast, almost half (47%) simply say they "don't know" what Kyoto commits Canada to doing. Finally, a total of 6% mentioned that Kyoto commits Canada to general things related to the environment or energy such as "reduce emissions", "reduce pollution", "has to do with energy consumption/utilities", and "spend more money on the environment".

- Ultimately, Albertans are divided about whether the Kyoto Protocol is the best way to deal with climate change. A slim majority (51%) says that "Canada could better address climate change by rejecting the Kyoto Protocol and implementing other initiatives instead". A smaller number hold the opposing point of view, with four in ten (44%) saying that "implementing the Kyoto protocol is the best way for Canada to address climate change".

Willingness to Pay

- There is broad consensus that implementing the Kyoto Protocol will have costs for both consumers (96%) and industry (97%). However, Albertans are almost ten points more likely to say industry (68%) as opposed to consumers (59%) will be faced with high costs. Only 1% of Albertans say that implementing the Kyoto Protocol will have no costs for consumers or industry.

- Most Alberta households (95%) are willing to pay something to implement the Kyoto Protocol. Seven in ten (71%) say their household would be willing to pay at least $500 each year to implement Kyoto. At the top end, one in five (19%) say their household would be willing to pay $2500 a year or more while at the bottom end, only 5% say their household would be willing to pay nothing.

- While many Albertans are willing to pay something to implement Kyoto Protocol, the specific actions they are willing to take shows that they prefer to make incremental one-time purchases that increase energy efficiency as opposed to making lifestyle changes or paying higher energy prices. Virtually all Albertans (91%) say they would be willing to buy a programmable thermostat and about nine in ten would be willing to take money saving measures such as: install high efficiency windows (89%), replace their old furnace (88%), improve the insulation in their house (87%), reduce the temperature in their hot water tank (87%), or buy a more fuel efficient vehicle (85%). Much fewer (64%), are willing to change their lifestyle by taking public transit to work rather than driving and even fewer are willing to pay more for household energy costs (44%) and pay more for gasoline at the pump (37%).

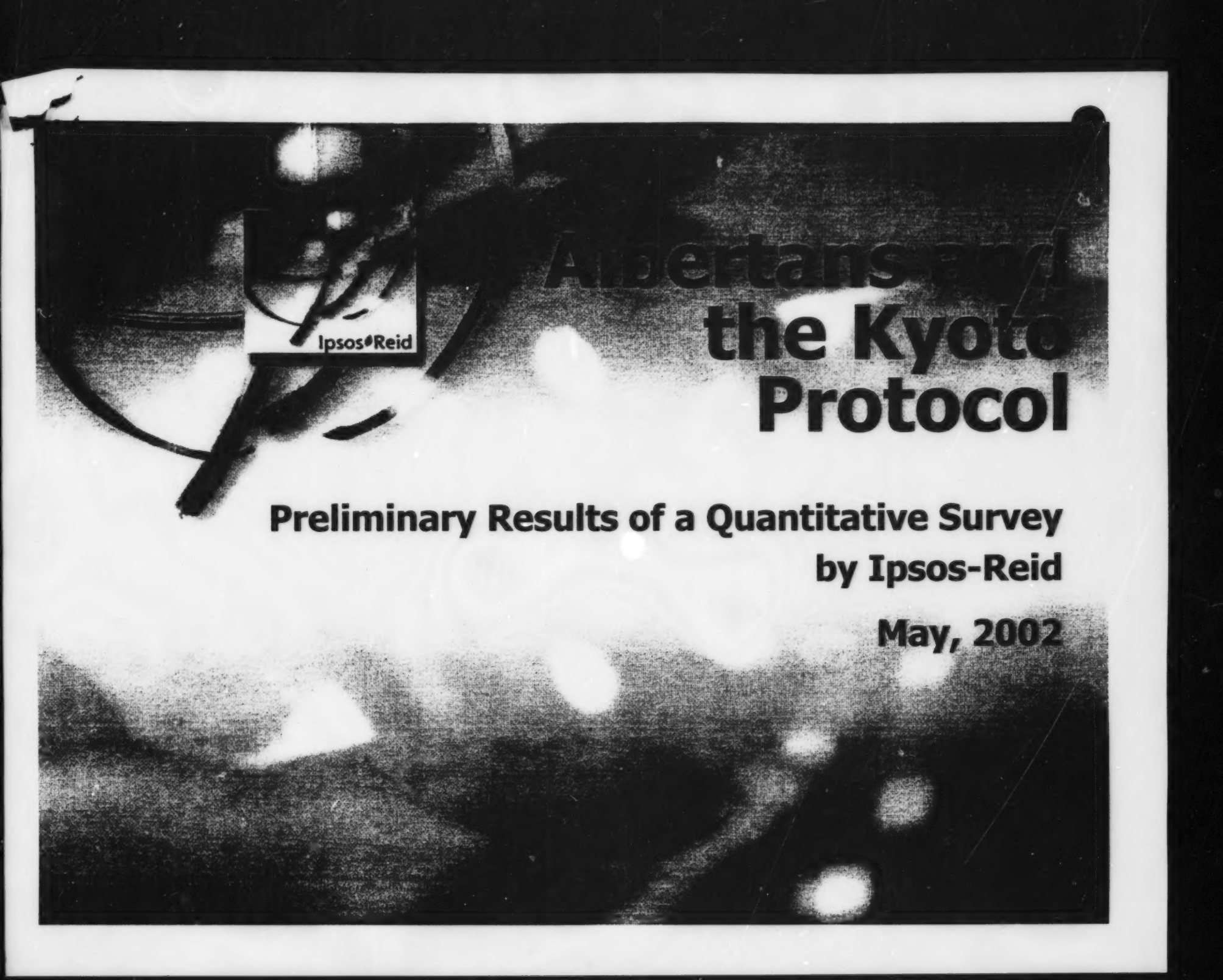
Attitudes Towards Kyoto

- Albertans are divided about whether Canada should ratify the Kyoto accord given that the United States has announced that it will not sign, and developing countries including China are exempt. A slim majority (52%) says that "Canada should not ratify the Kyoto Protocol unless these other countries ratify the protocol as well". Meanwhile, a slightly smaller number (46%) says that "Canada should ratify the Kyoto Protocol regardless of whether or not these other countries ratify the protocol as well".

- Assuming that Canada does ratify while the United States does not and developing countries such as China remain exempt, two thirds (67%) say Canada will be "at an economic disadvantage because countries that have not ratified the protocol will be able to produce goods more cheaply". In contrast, only one third (32%) agrees with the opposing viewpoint, that "Canada will not be at an economic disadvantage because technology will emerge that will allow companies to produce goods just as cheaply".

- In terms of Albertans' attitudes about the Kyoto Protocol, six in ten (59%) agree that "ratifying the Kyoto Protocol will badly damage the Alberta economy and many Albertans will lose their jobs". A slightly larger number (64%) say that "Canada should not sign the Kyoto Protocol until developing countries and China are required to sign the Protocol as well".

- Finally, only three in ten (30%) Albertans agree that the "Government of Canada has clearly communicated the costs and benefits of the Kyoto Protocol". Meanwhile, nine in ten (87%) agree that the "Government of Canada needs to spend more time investigating the cost and impact of the Kyoto Protocol before implementing it."



Albertans and the Kyoto Protocol

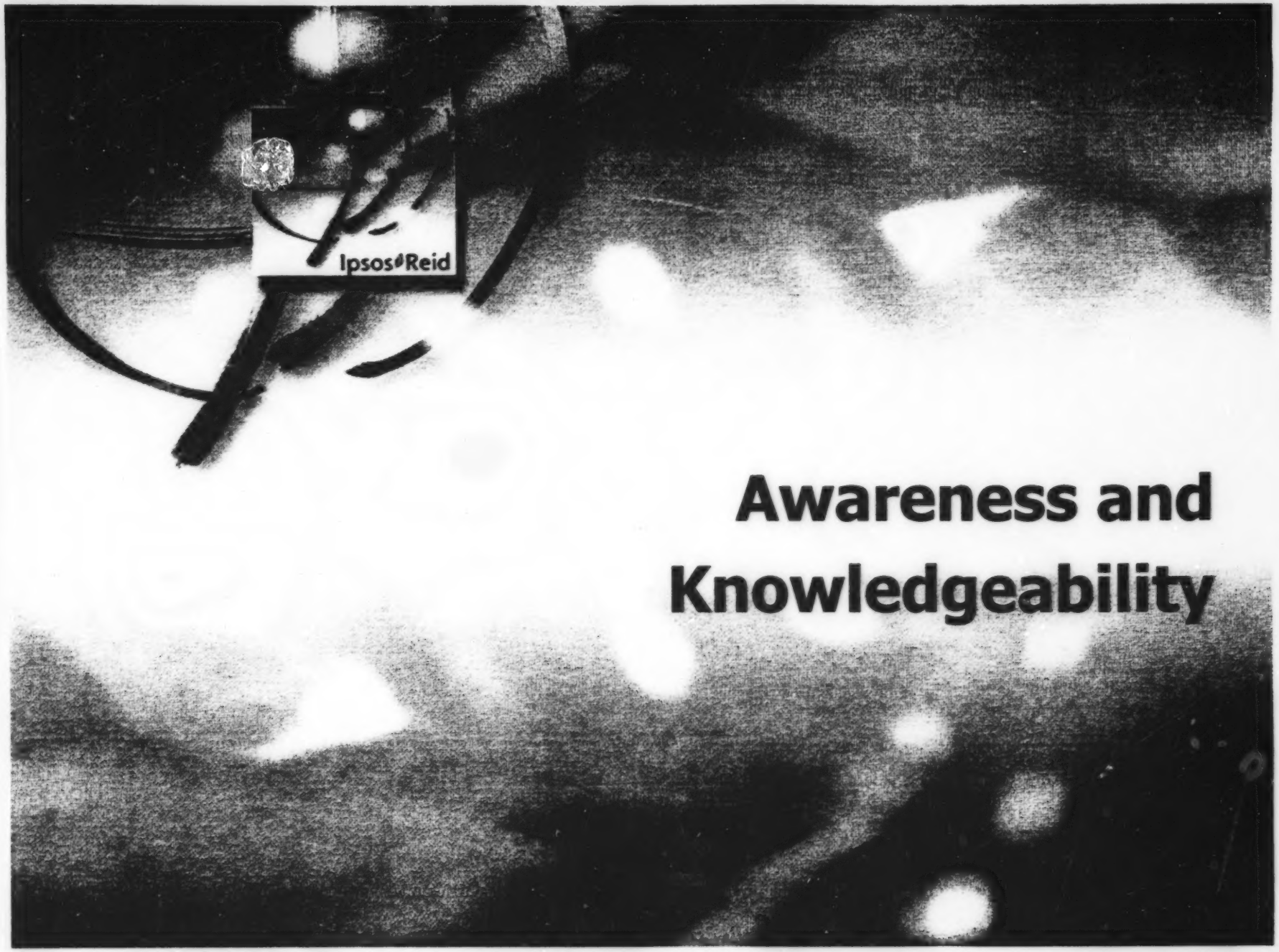
Preliminary Results of a Quantitative Survey by Ipsos-Reid

May, 2002

Methodology

Telephone Survey

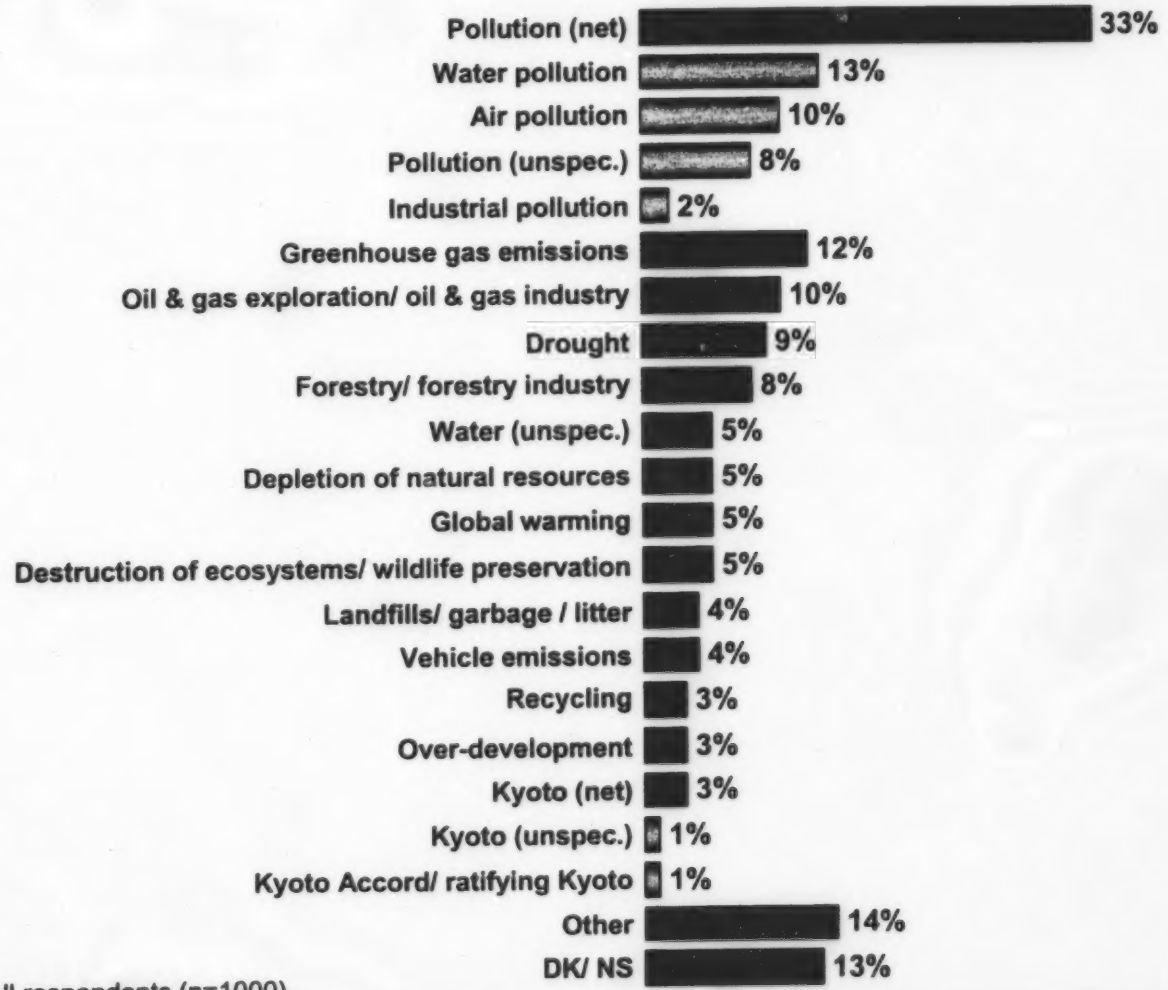
- Survey conducted among Albertans aged 18 and over.
- Survey fielded April 18th - 28th, 2002.
- 1000 interviews total (margin of error ± 3.1%, 19 times out of 20).
- Data were weighted to ensure that the sample's region, age and gender distribution reflects that of the actual Alberta population according to the 1996 census data.



Awareness and Knowledgeability

Climate change and global warming are on the public radar but are not top of the list

"In your opinion what are the most serious environmental issues facing Alberta today?"



Base: All respondents (n=1000)

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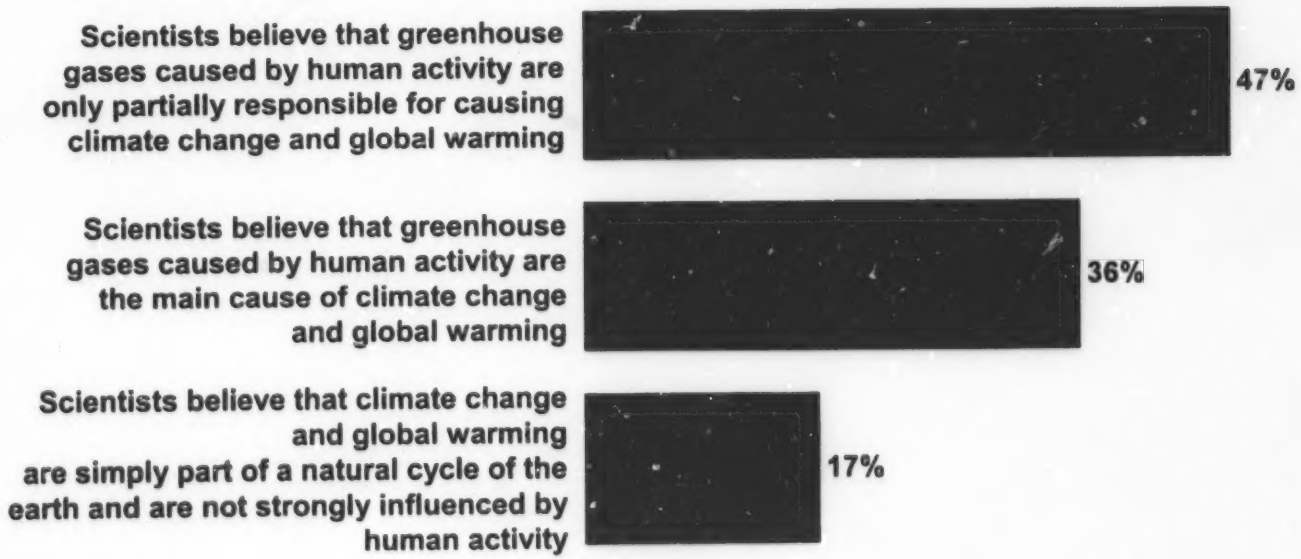
Aided awareness of climate change & global warming is high - slightly lower for Kyoto

"In the last month, do you recall seeing, hearing or reading anything about...?"

Base: Did not mention climate change, global warming, greenhouse gas emissions, Kyoto

Two thirds say global warming is at least partly due to natural causes

"At present scientists have differing opinions about the causes of climate change. I'm going to read you three different opinions scientists hold and when I'm finished, please tell me which one best represents your own point of view."


Scientists believe that greenhouse gases caused by human activity are only partially responsible for causing climate change and global warming
47%
Scientists believe that greenhouse gases caused by human activity are the main cause of climate change and global warming
36%
Scientists believe that climate change and global warming are simply part of a natural cycle of the earth and are not strongly influenced by human activity
17%

Base: All respondents (n=1000)

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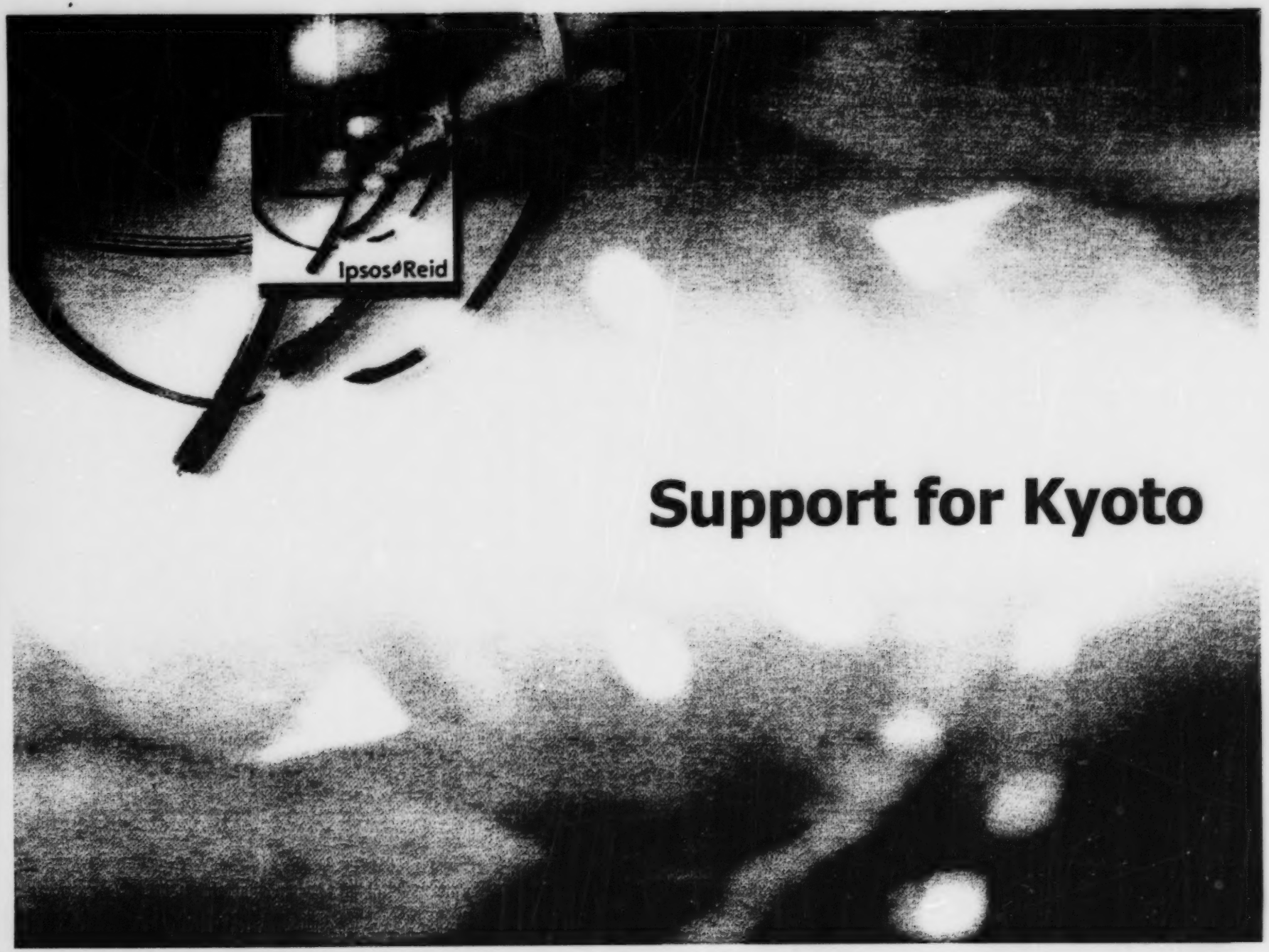
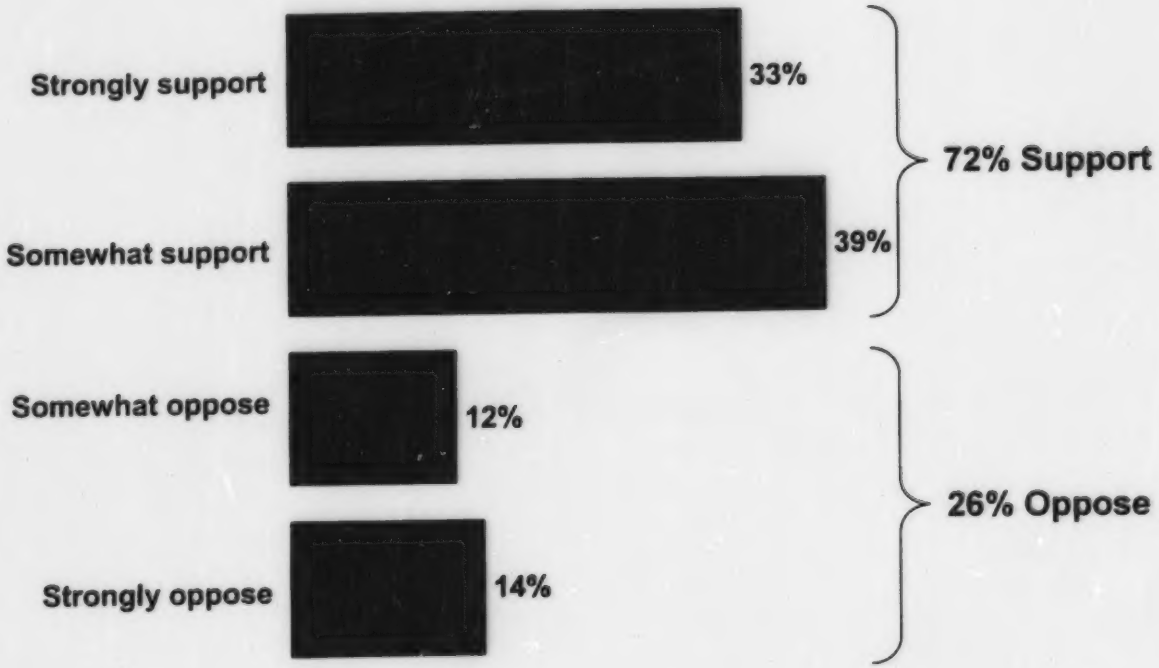


Support for Kyoto

Seven in ten support ratifying the Kyoto Protocol

"Do you personally strongly/ somewhat support or strongly/ somewhat oppose ratifying the Kyoto Protocol?"



Base: All respondents (n=1000)

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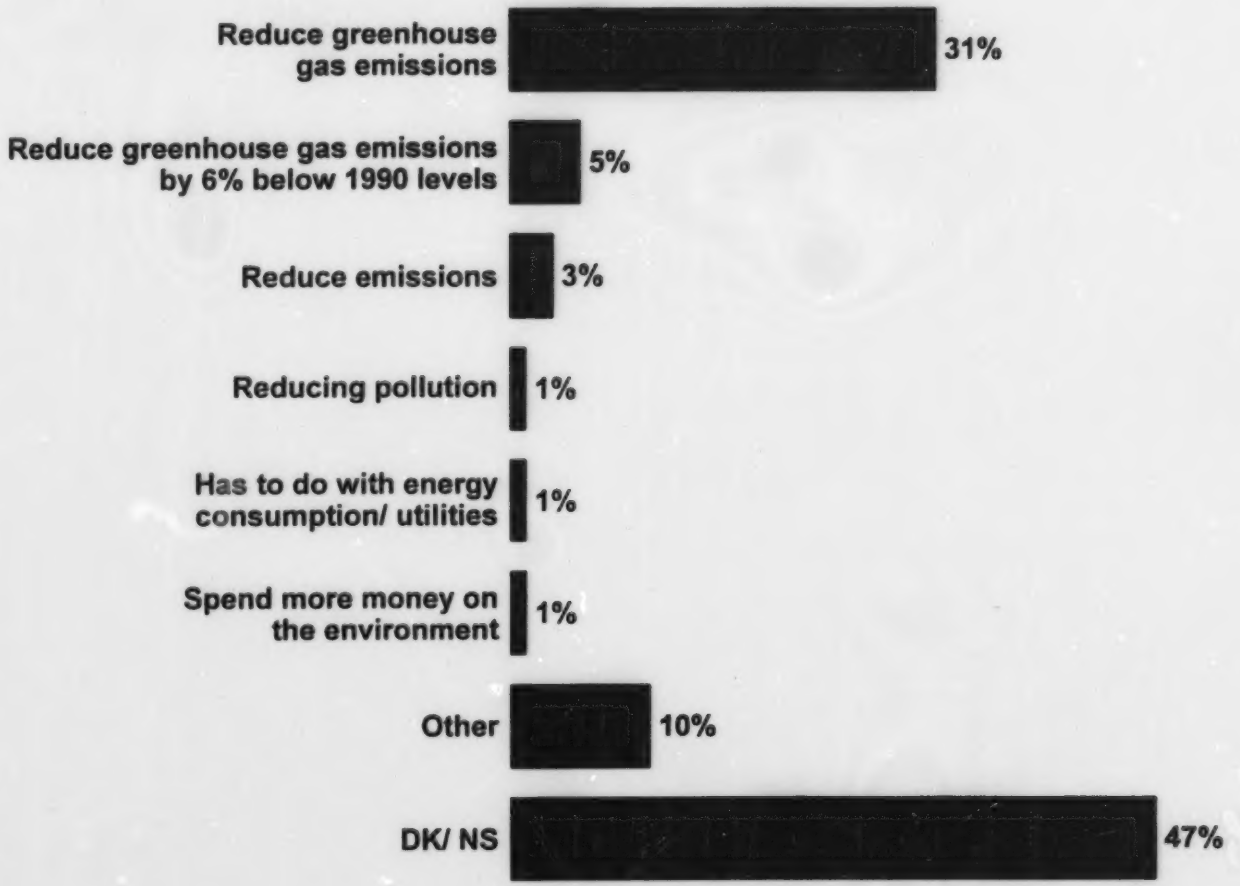
Few Albertans know specifically what Kyoto commits Canada to doing

"Based on the information you have seen, read or heard, what specifically does the Kyoto Protocol commit Canada to doing?"



Base: All respondents (n=1000)

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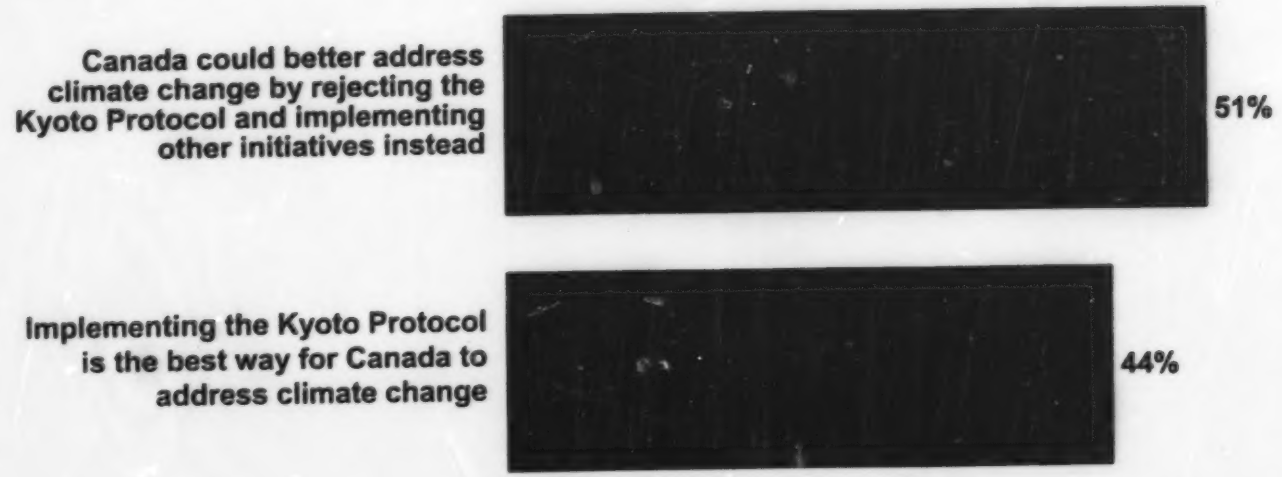
Albertans divided, but think that we could better address climate change outside Kyoto

"Some people say that implementing the Kyoto Protocol is the best way for Canada to address climate change. Some people say that Canada could better address climate change by rejecting the Kyoto Protocol and implementing other initiatives instead. Which of these two opinions is closer to your own?"


Canada could better address climate change by rejecting the Kyoto Protocol and implementing other initiatives instead
51%
Implementing the Kyoto Protocol is the best way for Canada to address climate change
44%

Base: All respondents (n=1000)

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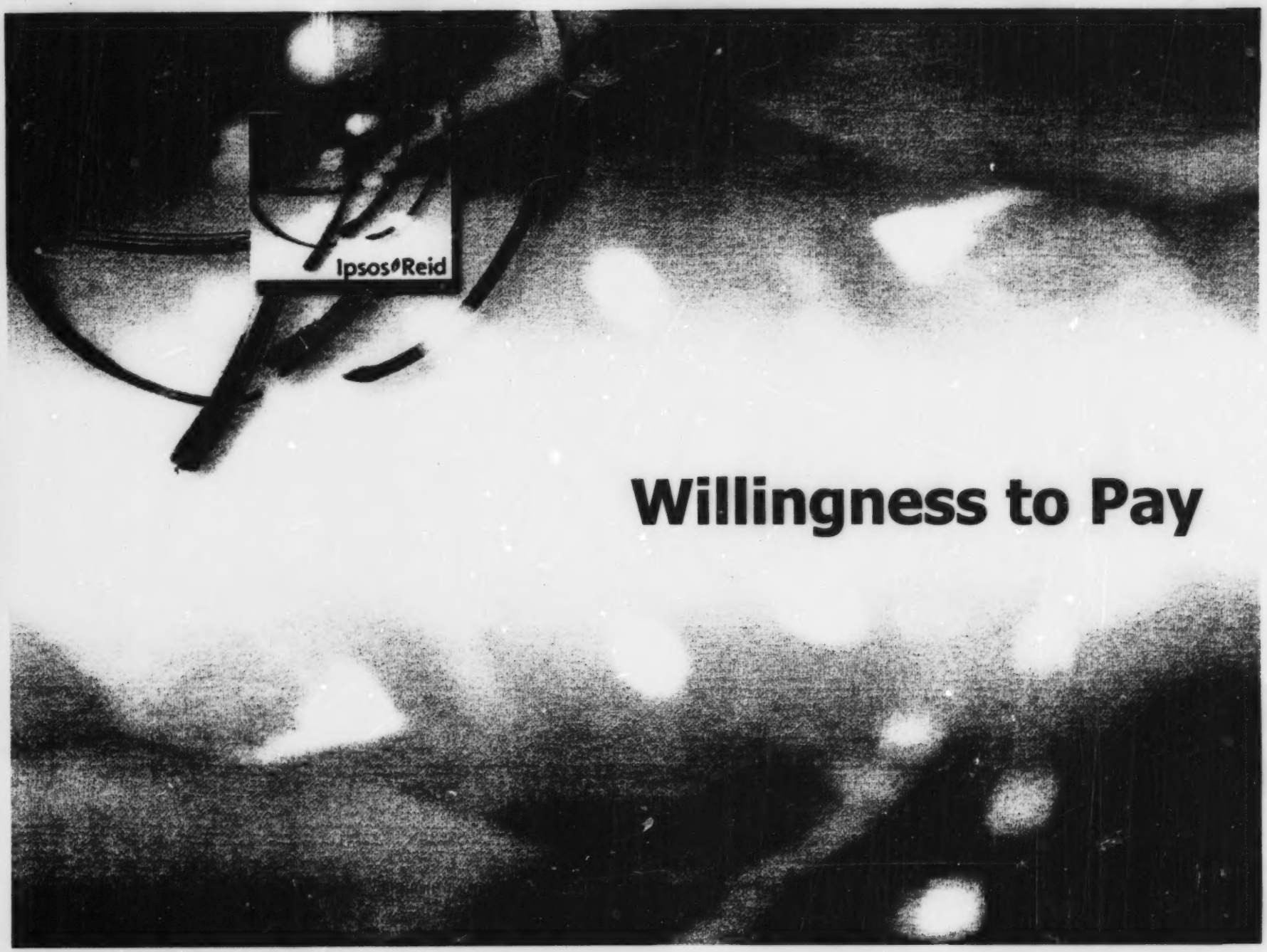
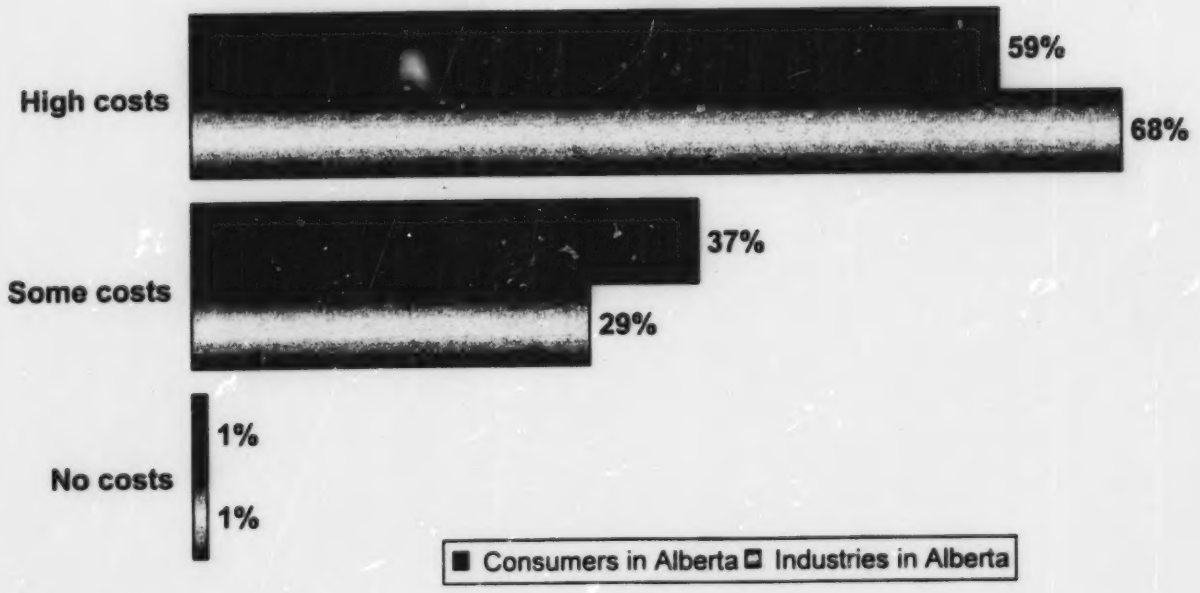


Willingness to Pay

Most say implementing Kyoto will have high costs for both industry and consumers

"To the best of your knowledge, will implementing the Protocol have no costs, some costs or high costs for consumers/industries in Alberta?"



Base: All respondents (n=1000)

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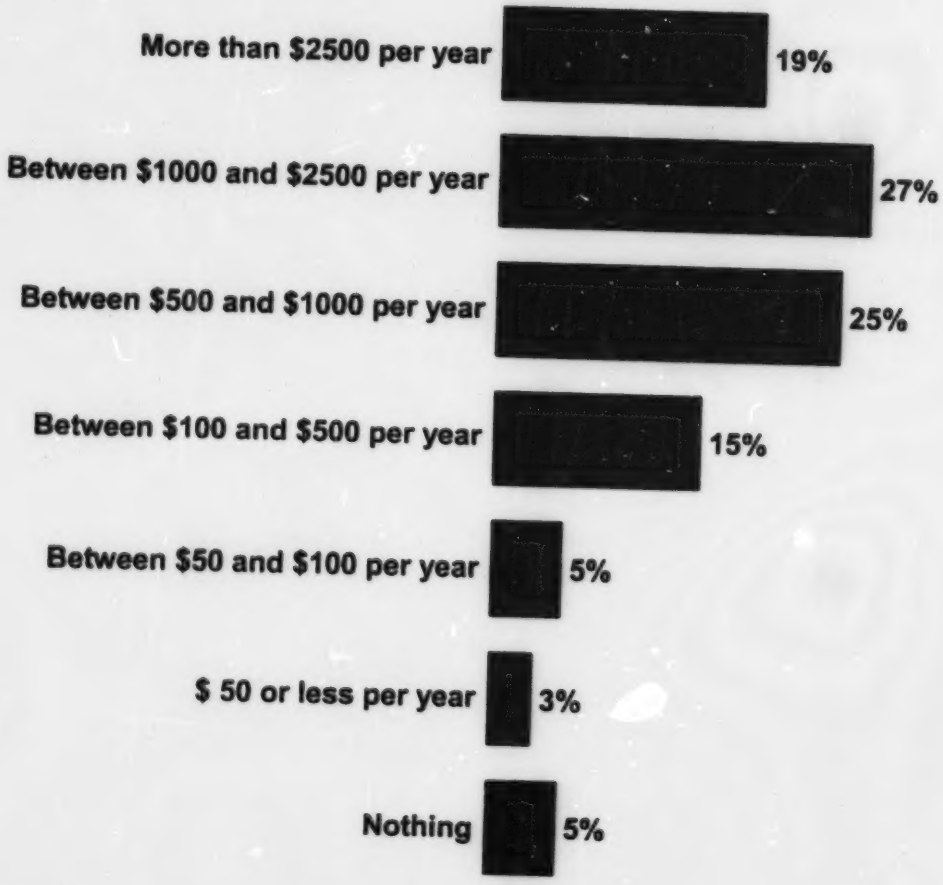
Most Alberta households willing to pay $500 or more to implement Kyoto

"Would you be willing to pay … to implement the Kyoto Protocol?"



Base: All respondents (n=1000)

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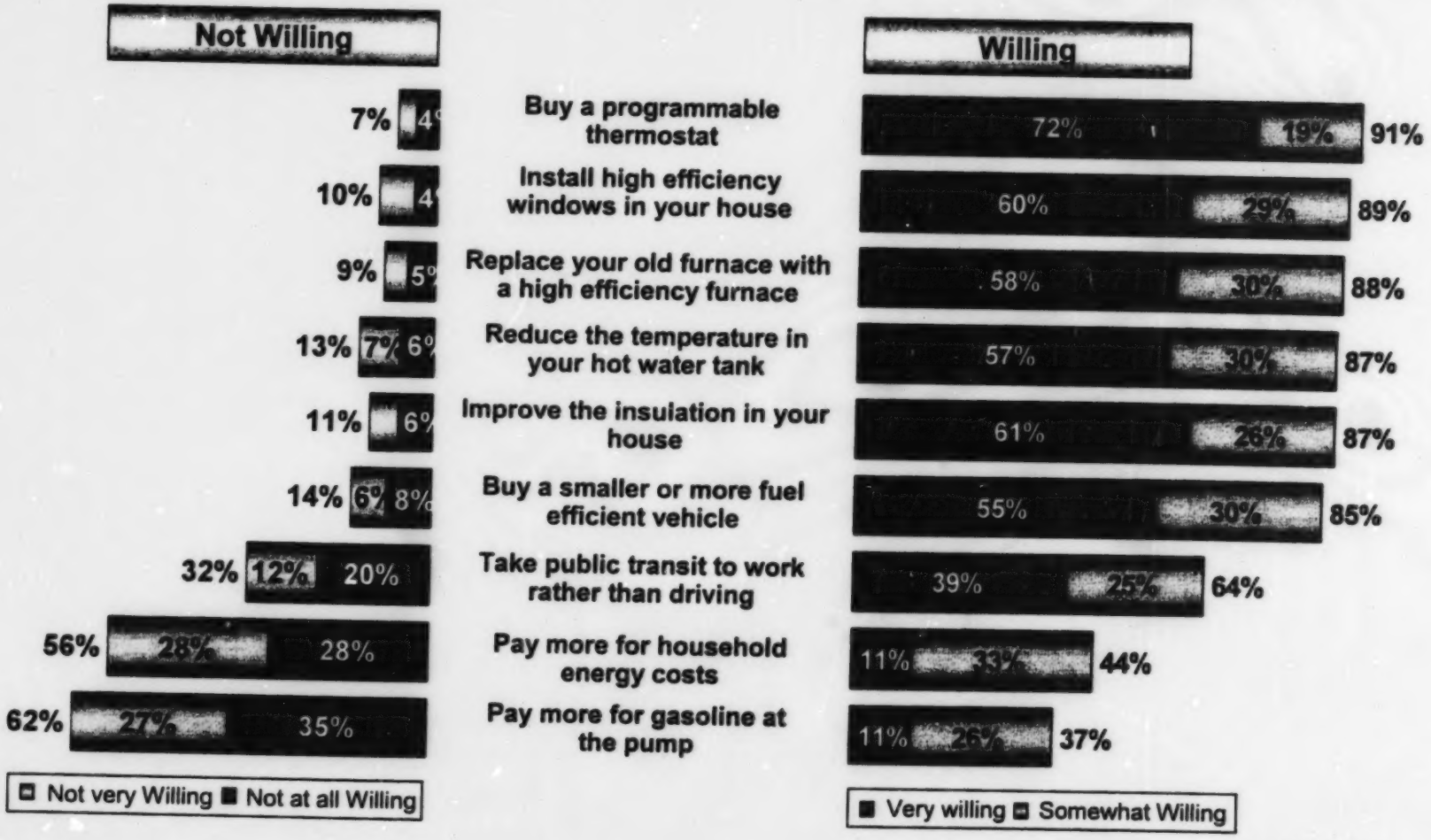
Albertans willing to make one-off changes - less willing to make lifestyle changes

"Please tell me whether you personally would be willing or not willing to ... To deal with climate change?"



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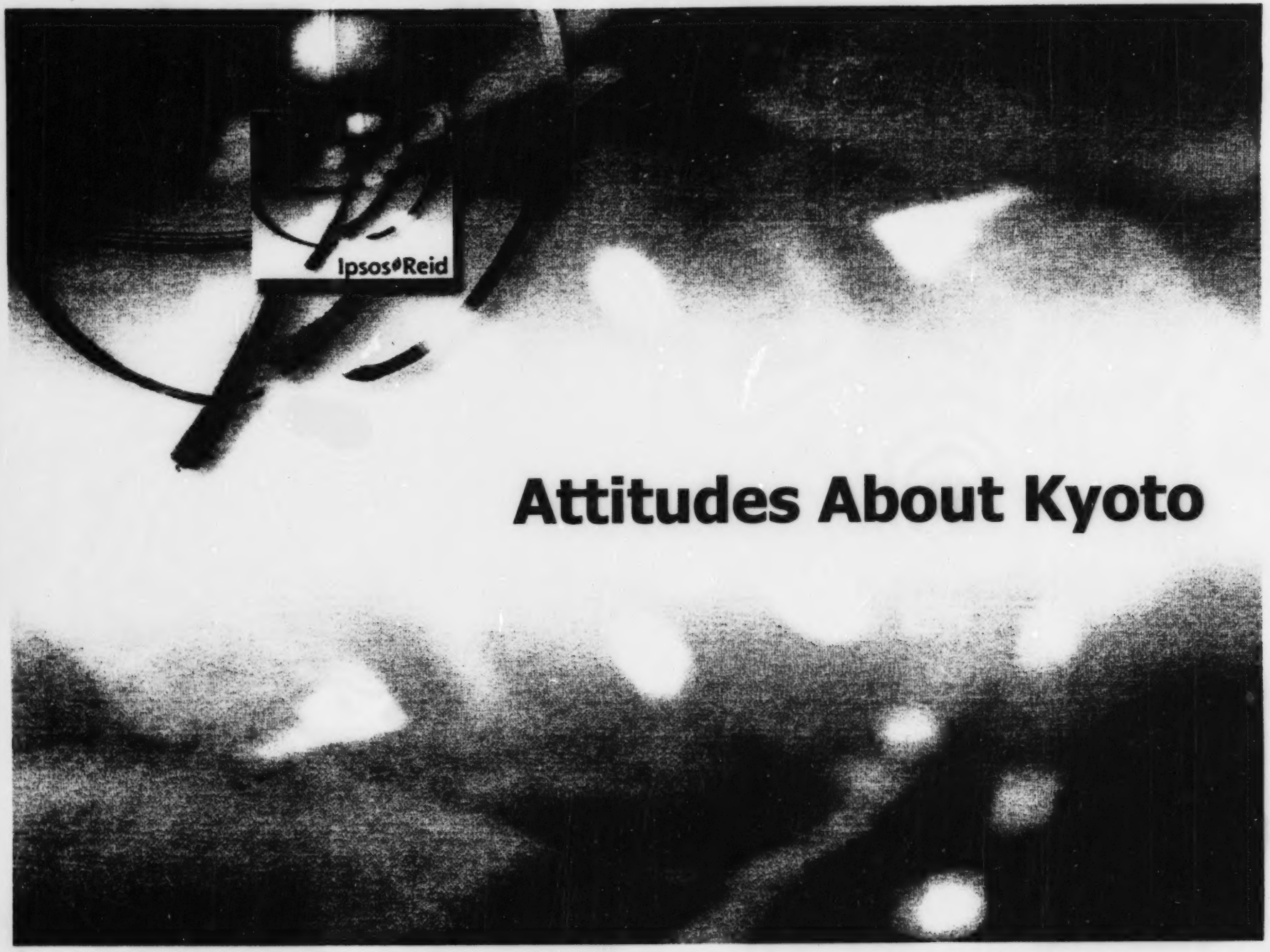
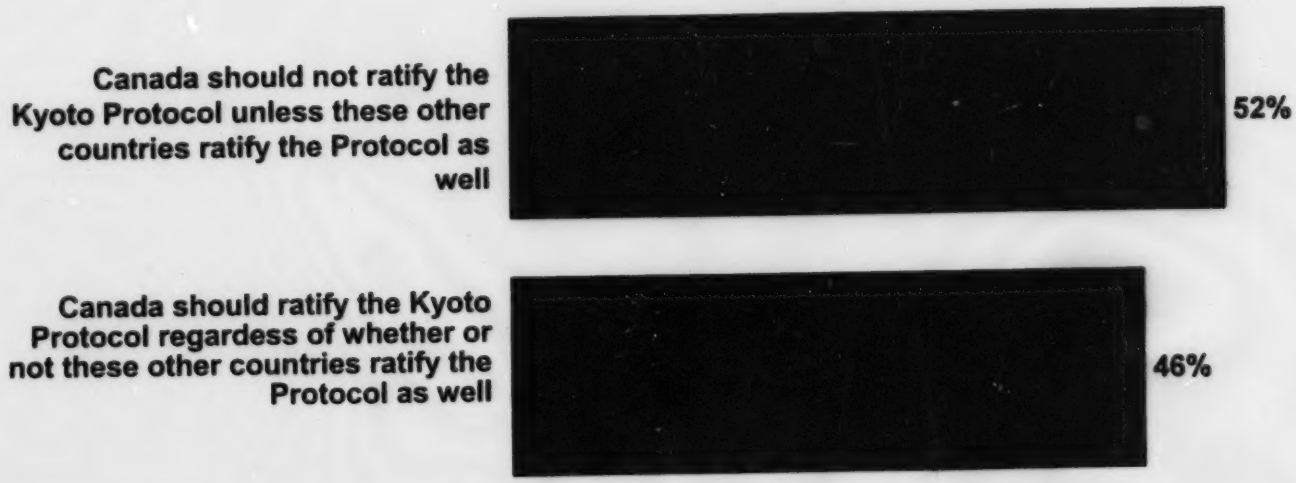


Attitudes About Kyoto

Albertans are divided over whether Canada should ratify Kyoto if others do not

"As you may know, the United States, our major trading partner, has anounced that it will not sign the Kyoto Protocol. Also, major developing countries including China are currently exempt from meeting the targets set by the Kyoto Protocol. Which of these two opinions is closer to your own?"


Canada should not ratify the Kyoto Protocol unless these other countries ratify the Protocol as well
52%
Canada should ratify the Kyoto Protocol regardess of whether or not these other countries ratify the Protocol as well
46%

Base: All respondents (n=1000)

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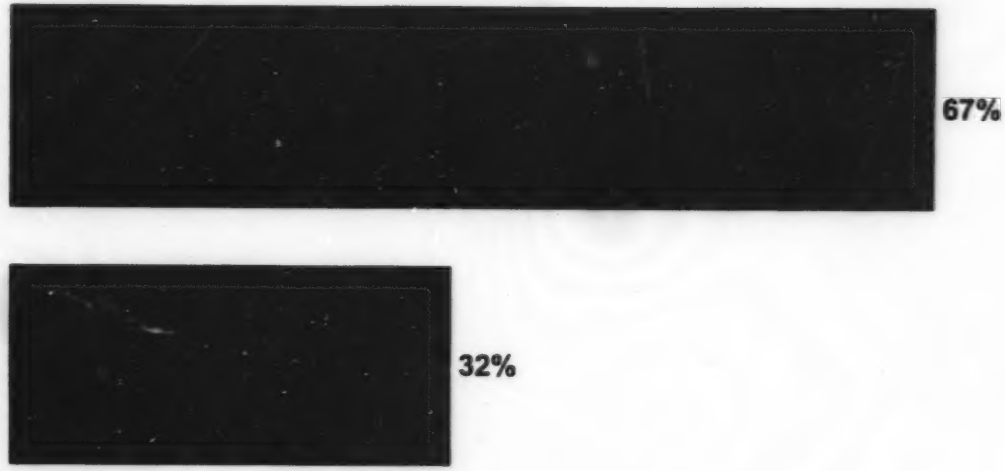
Two thirds are concerned that if Canada ratifies we will be at a disadvantage

"Now, lets assume Canada does ratify the Kyoto Protocol and these other countries do not. Which of these opinions is closer to your own?"


Canada will be at an economic disadvantage because countries that have not ratified the Protocol will be able to produce goods more cheaply
67%
Canada will not be at an economic disadvantage because technology will emerge that will allow companies to produce goods just as cheaply
32%

Base: All respondents (n=1000)

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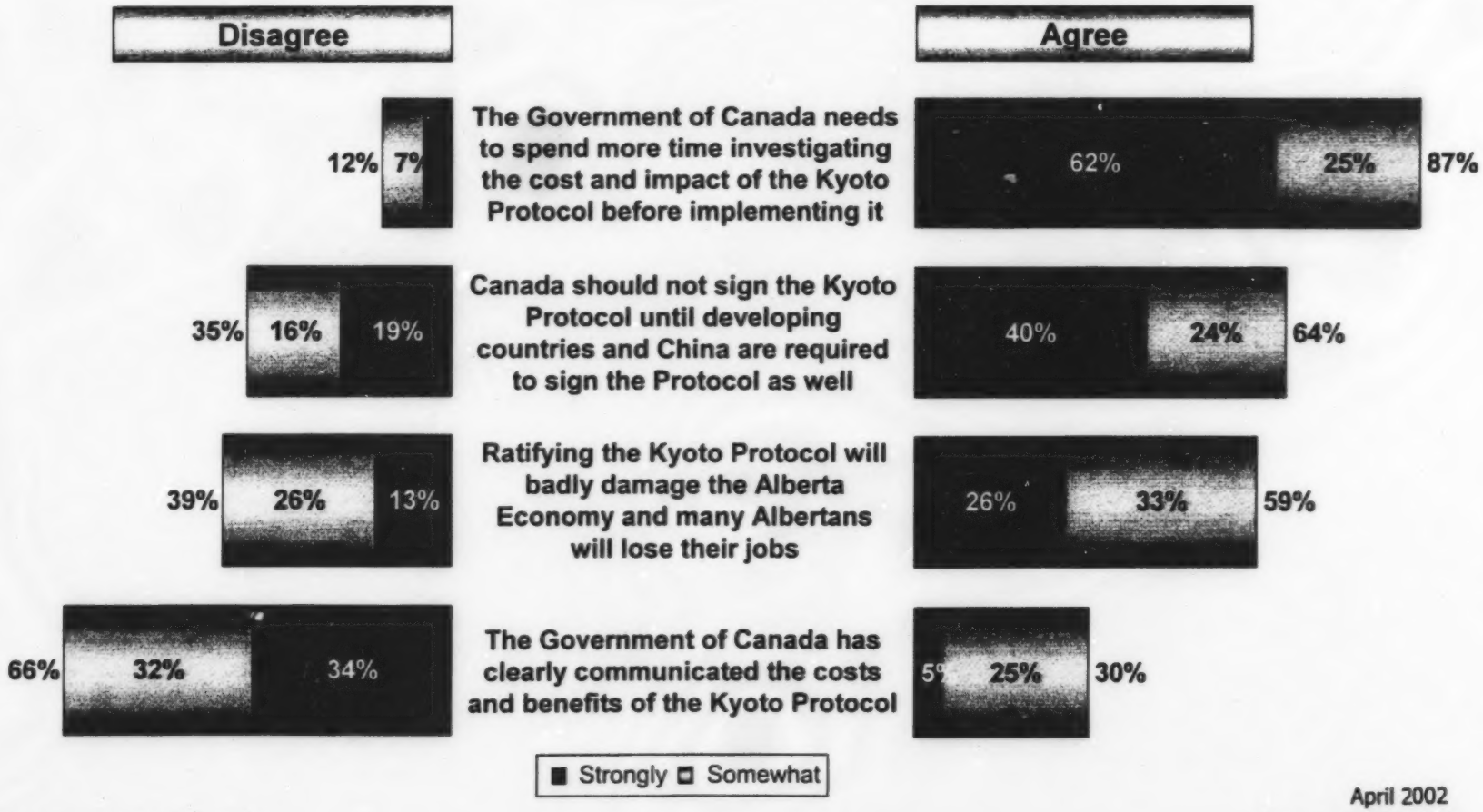
Albertans want more information and are concerned about Kyoto's economic impact

"Do you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree that… ?"



Base: All respondents (n=1000)

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